

REMARKS

This application has been reviewed in light of the Final Office Action mailed on March 31, 2003. Claims 1-24 are pending in the application with Claims 1, 8, 15 and 21 being in independent form. By the present amendment, Claims 1-4, 6-8, 14 and 15 have been amended and Claims 5, 21, 22, 23 and 24 have been cancelled. Claims 1, 8, and 15 and the specification have been amended to include the recitations of Claim 5. Therefore, no new matter is believed to be introduced by the amendments. Also, since the independent claims have been amended to include previously claimed limitations, Applicants respectfully submit that a new search is not warranted.

I. Rejection of Claims 1, 4-8, 10-19, 21 and 23-24 Under 35 U.S.C. §102(b)

Claims 1, 4-8, 10-19, 21 and 23-24 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over U.S. Patent No. 5,640,002 issued to Ruppert et al. ("Ruppert et al."). Claims 21, 23 and 24 were cancelled and Claims 1, 8 and 15 were amended in a manner believed to obviate the rejection.

Amended Claim 1 recites in part "...wherein at least one of said first and second auto ID reader is an interchangeable module that is interchangeable with modules including at least one of a bar code symbol reader, a smart card reader, a digital sensor, and a fingerprint detector." Claims 8 and 15 include similar recitations.

Ruppert et al. discloses a device having multiple readers. The device includes a bar code reader, a smart card reader, a credit card reader, an RF ID tag reader, and a magnetic stripe card reader.

Ruppert et al. does not disclose or suggest a data collection assembly where at least one of a first and a second reader is an interchangeable module that is interchangeable with modules including at least one of a bar code symbol reader, a smart card reader, a digital sensor, and a fingerprint detector, as recited by Applicants' Claims 1, 8 and 15. Therefore, it is believed that Claims 1, 8 and 15 are patentably distinct over Ruppert et al. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection with respect to Claims 1, 8 and 15 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over Ruppert et al. and allowance thereof are respectfully requested.

Dependent Claims 4-7, 10-14 and 16-19 depend from Claims 1, 8 and 15 and thus are limited by the language found therein. Accordingly, for at least the reasons given above for Claims 1, 8 and 15, withdrawal of the rejection of Claims 4-7, 10-14 and 16-19 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over Ruppert et al. and allowance thereof are respectfully requested.

II. Rejection of Claims 2-3 and 22 Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 2-3 and 22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Ruppert et al. in view of admitted prior art.

Claim 22 was cancelled and Claims 2 and 3 depend from Claim 1 and thus are limited by the language found therein. Accordingly, for at least the reasons given above for Claim 1, withdrawal of the rejection with respect to Claims 2 and 3 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Ruppert et al. in view of admitted prior art and allowance thereof are respectfully requested.

III. Rejection of Claim 9 Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claim 9 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Ruppert et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,705,800 issued to Dvorkis et al. ("Dvorkis et al.").

Claim 9 depends from Claim 8 and thus is limited by the language found therein. Accordingly, for at least the reasons given above for Claim 8, withdrawal of the rejection with respect to Claim 9 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Ruppert et al. in view of Dvorkis et al. and allowance thereof are respectfully requested.

IV. Rejection of Claim 20 Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claim 20 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Ruppert et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,175,922 issued to Wang ("Wang").

Claim 20 depends from Claim 15 and thus is limited by the language found therein. Accordingly, for at least the reasons given above for Claim 15, withdrawal of the rejection with respect to Claim 20 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Ruppert et al. in view of Wang and allowance thereof are respectfully requested.

V. Conclusions

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that all claims presently pending in the application, namely, Claims 1-4 and 6-20, are believed to be in condition for allowance and patentably distinguishable over the art of record.

If the Examiner should have any questions concerning this communication or feels that an interview would be helpful, the Examiner is requested to call Applicants' undersigned attorney at the number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,



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